

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-3 and 16-19 remain pending in the application.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

Claims 1, 3, 16, 18, and 19 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Tani et al. in view of Applicant's admitted prior art. Claims 2 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as allegedly being unpatentable in view of Tani et al. in view of Applicant's admitted prior art, and further in view of Udagawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the After Final Reply under 37 CFR §1.116 dated May 12, 2004, Applicant set forth detailed arguments in support of Applicant's position that the asserted grounds of rejection fail to establish a *prima facie* case obviousness of any pending claims.

For sake of conciseness, such detailed arguments are incorporated herein by reference. Applicant submits that such arguments are fully responsive to the final Office Action dated February 12, 2004 and respectfully requests the asserted grounds of rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn based on such arguments.

REQUEST FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEW

In an effort to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicant respectfully requests a personal interview prior to issuance of the next Office Action. Since Applicant does not know when the Examiner will reach this case for examination, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned to arrange for the interview.

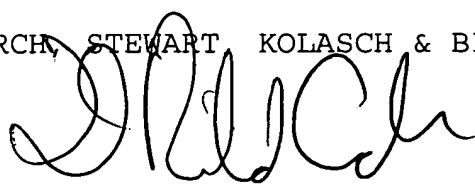
CONCLUSION

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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